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Diplomacy Takes Over

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by Ernest K. Lindley

WITH a cease-fire in Korea, the challenge to American diplomacy will become even greater than it has been during the fighting. The war helped to hold together our basic alliances and postponed decision on questions on which the free world is divided. Now these questions come to the front again against a background of fatigue and political uncertainty in Europe and a new set of riddles in Moscow.

How well prepared is American diplomacy to shoulder this greater burden? We have a President and a Secretary of State with unusual grasp of world affairs. The President's high tribute to Dulles last week was timely, for the Secretary of State has not only been a target for various Republicans in Congress but has lacked the firm support of some members of the White House staff.

The President also has in key positions some other men of long experience and ripe judgment in international affairs, including Allen Dulles, head of the CIA, W. Bedell Smith, Under Secretary of State, and the Chiefs of Staff. And the State Department has a core of first-rate career men.

However, to give the impression that the State Department is in good shape would be misleading. The wreckage of the Voice of America and related activities is being detached. The rest of the department has not been so heavily damaged, but its morale and, as a result, probably its efficiency are at the lowest ebb within living memory. The grotesqueries tolerated in the name of "security" have also subjected the American Government to derision among civilized people both at home and abroad. These are among the consequences of the White House policy of appeasing McCarthyism.

To assert that we have seized the initiative vis-à-vis Moscow deceives no one but ourselves. Far from winning the initiative, it has become evident in recent months that even our leadership of the free world has suffered a loss of prestige and influence. For

reasons, some beyond our control.

There is a brighter side to the picture, however. President Eisenhower's own utterances on international affairs have been generally applauded in the free world. Secretary Dulles has done excellent ground work in many directions.



The unmistakable proof that the American Government wanted a truce in Korea rather than a broadening of the war has been vastly reassuring to many of our allies. And it has not escaped notice abroad that when the decision was made, Senator Knowland, who had been tagged as an advocate of a bigger war,

urged President Rhee to go along with the truce.

Prime Minister Nehru's statement commending the President was in itself significant. Nehru has revealed a better understanding of American policy since Secretary Dulles's trip to New Delhi. Until, then he doubted that the new Administration really wanted peace. A Korean truce will at least temporarily tend to restore the confidence of many of our friends in American leadership.

Also, although Moscow is in a real sense exercising the initiative at this time, it is using it in a direction which superficially is encouraging. No one can be sure how much it is motivated by weakness, how much by strength. Its tactics are dangerous in so far as they promote division and complacency in the free world. But they almost certainly indicate a desire to find out what can be accomplished by negotiation.

THE first task of our diplomacy is now to try to get a meeting of minds with our principal allies on the terms of adjustment with Moscow and Peking. These terms should be designed to test whether the Communists really are ready to make agreements which hold at least the promise of a period of international stability. One of these tests is whether, and on what conditions, they are willing to permit the unification of the countries now divided: Austria, Germany, and